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2 September 1952

Personnel Office

SELECTION CRITERIA EMPLOYED IN THE RECRUITMENT PROCESS

There follows a brief precis of certain of the most salient criteria used in the recruitment process to assist in determining "overall suitability to work in CIA on a career basis". Naturally such a list cannot be all-inclusive but the criteria which follow are believed to be most important in carrying out this task.

1. MOTIVATION:

An immediate effort is made by the recruiter to determine the amount and kind of the applicant's motivation for service. How much selflessness is there in his stated desire to be employed by CIA? Is he seeking to advance himself financially, or if he is willing to accept a lesser salary to work for us is he leaving his present job under pleasant conditions? Is there anything in his record to show past interest in problems connected with, or tangential to, international relations and world conditions? What kind of a record did he have in the service and what were his personal reactions toward his service job and/or regimentation? Has he joined any patriotic or civic organizations, and if so, what were his reasons for so doing? Has he personal reasons for wanting to serve, like the loss of a relative in war or to the communist aggression? Is he attracted only by the mystery and intrigue of CIA as he envisions it? If he is employed, is he willing to discuss leaving his job with his employer prior to receiving a definite offer from CIA? Is he facing imminent recall to active duty in the Armed Forces or is he draft eligible and is this the reason for his interest in the Agency?

2. FLEXIBILITY:

The recruiter attempts to determine from the record and from questions, to what extent the applicant exhibits personal flexibility in his attitudes and work habits. Skilled questioning will often bring out evidence of authoritarian points of view toward major political and social questions that are not supported by abiding convictions. A person who "would vote for a Republican if he was a yellow dog" might come under this heading. Quite often in

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inflexible person will indulge in surface reasoning that can be detected in a good interview. An applicant who states a preference for a type of work that enables him to go to the same office at the same time every day and do the same things all the time would be classified by the recruiter as inflexible. The recruiter might inquire if the applicant is willing to alter his thinking in the face of overwhelming evidence to the contrary on a question he had been supporting; this produces interesting answers. We also ask, usually indirectly, if the subject is capable of assimilating more and more new facts about old and new matters with which he may be reasonably familiar. Frequently, self-styled experts or even acknowledged experts, show tendencies to resist new facts, or at least those that tend to detract from their premises. Lastly, we inquire about the manner in which he gets along with his contemporaries, associates and superiors. Is he willing to advance a point of view not subscribed to by his bosses, or does he display independence of thought only toward his inferiors?

### 3. INTELLECTUAL WORTH:

Leaving aside the matter of technical proficiencies, which comes under the heading of "qualifications", the recruiter must attempt to discover if his applicant has true intellectual worth for a professional position. He will seek to determine if the job-seeker is a scholar or merely a craftsman. Was his intellectual experience a joy or a chore? Is his intellectual reasoning too theoretical or is it buttressed by practical experience. Is learning a continuing process for him, or one confined within the walls of a college and within a framework of years? A skilled interviewer will make discreet inquiry into the areas of his avocations, and in particular the scope of his extra-vocational reading. An effort is made to determine if the applicant is an "intellectual name dropper" who glibly tosses off descriptive phrases merely to impress the listener with the amount of his knowledge. Is he an apparent dreamer, or does he have a truly inquisitive mind? If the subject comes from an academic environment, does he subscribe to the "union card" theory about advanced degrees or does he pursue scholarship for the sake of learning more about his subject matter? Does he publish merely to insure the security of his academic position and to establish basis for tenure, and do his publications touch on original discoveries or does he content himself with reworking of old topics, either his own or those of experts in his field? Does he reason with clarity and simplicity or does he reach for resounding terms and startling phrases designed

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to impress the listener without adding to his appreciation of the topic? What is his reputation among others in his field or of like accomplishments?

4. EMOTIONAL STABILITY:

A good recruiter is constantly on the alert for evidences of a lack of emotional stability in his applicant. Aside from the security implications of emotional instability and its attendant problems, it is important for the recruiter to give a general reaction to the amount and kind of the applicant's personal adjustment to his family, associates and environment. Personal mannerisms are frequently a clue to nervousness and insecurity and should be watched carefully, but the applicant should be questioned directly about the degree of his adjustment, both present and past. The recruiter should make no claim to psychiatric abilities, and he must realize that areas as personal as these are ones where the applicant may try to cover up any failings, but usually a good impression may be gained through a combination of observation and questioning. A tangential way to get these answers may be through questions aimed at his family life: if he is married, what led him to get married; and if unmarried, why has he not yet taken the plunge? The answers to questions in this area may be virtually indistinguishable from those received in other categories, and may of necessity be closely tied in with the problem of motivation, flexibility, intellectual worth, etc. Direct questions about emotional stability often produce the best answers because their very directness tends to be disarming: "Do you regard yourself as an emotionally stable person, Mr. Jones" will produce an unguarded reaction more often than not, and one that is probably pretty close to the truth. Although divorce has become a more accepted form of social behavior in the past generation, evidence of one or more marriages should be tactfully explored by the recruiter to see what form of reasoning is behind the applicant's particular problem of adjusting to life in close quarters with another person. In the same light, it would be well to question an unmarried male applicant of say, forty years, about his reasons for preferring the single state, because the line of questioning, if skillfully pursued, might disclose an overly strong relationship to his parents that might tend to seriously hamper his effectiveness and/or mobility with this Agency. The success or failure of questioning along lines of emotional stability depends wholly upon the ability of the recruiter to sense acceptance of or withdrawal from certain sensitive areas.

5. PERSONAL MOBILITY:

In view of the increasing importance of overseas operations under the support command concept and because of the relative value of overseas service in career development, each recruiter is instructed to

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determine without exception the willingness of the applicant to serve overseas, and the conditions under which he will render such service. Also, because certain positions in the Agency require temporary assignments overseas and shifts within the United States, it is important that we have an indication of the applicant's willingness to travel for short or extended periods of time. In general, an applicant diminishes his chances of career employment in direct proportion to the number of restrictions he places upon his movement. If he consents to overseas service only where he can take his family, he may have eliminated himself from consideration for the type of service that his background has otherwise prepared him for. If he will not go overseas at all under any conditions, the recruiter is trained to advise him, unless otherwise directed, that this seriously hampers his employment opportunities and career development. Personal mobility, or the lack of it, is often a clue to more important things, such as flexibility and motivation, and should be thoroughly explored with the applicant at the time of interview.

6. SECURITY SENSE.

This might more properly be termed "covert awareness", or an appreciation not only for the need for security but also for the need for dissembling in order to accomplish the covert mission of the Agency. The presence of covert awareness in an applicant is usually highly desirable, even in a so-called overt position, for many people transfer to covert operations at some time during their Agency career. An applicant of rigid moral principle (lack of flexibility) usually has little appreciation of, or respect for, the covert type of operation. Yet some people seem born with an awareness of the devious ways of getting things done, without themselves being immoral. Evidences of this quality may often be found in a man's record: he was an organizer in his school's internal politics. He may have a reputation as a man who gets things done no matter what the obstacles that lie before him. He is known as a promoter, a "doer" though his type is by no means limited to the bounding extrovert. His introverted counterpart may be better able to mount an operation for his own or other's gain without calling attention to himself. In some social groupings this trait is almost entirely lacking, and it is generally found more abundantly where either the individual or his environment provides a backdrop of sufficient sophistication or urgency to promote the growth of this ingredient needed in the intelligence process. The recruiter seeks to determine the capabilities of the applicant for a-moral rather than immoral behavior, particularly if he is recruiting for a covert type job.

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Covert awareness is frequently found in foreign groupings where the struggle for survival or for dominance takes on infinitely more complicated aspects than in America, with its tradition of open, straightforward behavior.

7. INTELLIGENCE APPRECIATION:

This characteristic is closely allied with covert awareness, sometimes so much so that it is virtually indistinguishable. However, when a prospect has been discovered for a strictly overt, departmental position, it may be sufficient to determine his potential for long-term growth in the Agency to discover in what light he holds the intelligence process. Usually, this line of questioning follows a trend of inquiring into what he knows about the intelligence community and/or the intelligence function in government as it relates to the orderly development of foreign policy. An applicant who draws a blank when it comes to integrating the intelligence function into his previously existing ideas about government will raise many another question in the mind of a good recruiter. It is not necessary that the applicant be able to spell out the various functions peripheral to intelligence, but if he is unacquainted with the topic and shows little apparent interest in its exposition by the recruiter, the latter should report a potential or actual unsuitability for the Agency, at least on a career basis, or unless the applicant's skills are so esoteric that the lack of this intelligence sense would not hamper his use on a "one-shot operation". Intelligence appreciation is frequently found where it is least expected, and the recruiter is cautioned not to form any predispositions as to its possible location. In some quarters this trait is known as "having a feel for intelligence".

8. EVIDENCE OF CAREER PLANNING:

From a personnel point of view, the existence of this trait in an applicant is a very favorable sign, because it insures the Agency getting an individual who is making a thoughtful step when he seeks employment with us. This quality should be examined by the recruiter along with motivation and the other ingredients alluded to above, but its existence tends to confirm the strengths of the other assets a man may have. Its apparent absence may be for reasons beyond the control of the applicant, like military service for instance, but this can easily be determined by direct questioning. Its presence is usually a good indication of an orderly mind, and more often than not of a well-adjusted person. An applicant who does not think about career

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planning may show a record that includes changing major subjects several times in college, changing jobs from one broad vocational field to another without apparent reason, and usually in rapid succession. In industry, this behavior is called "job hopping". It may also be an indication of attitudes of personal insecurity, and may be examined in the same context as emotional stability, to which there has been previous allusion. The recruiter must learn to draw a fine line between the applicant who questions him about career opportunities in the Agency and the one whose questions about career are couched in terms of surrounding himself with a wall of personal security and immunity from encroachment by younger, more talented individuals. The man whose questions are almost entirely in terms of the benefits he feels are rightly his, like leave, retirement, etc., should be regarded in a chary light for career employment, though a reasonable concern for these topics is not out of order. Careful thinking along lines of career planning is usually a good index as to a man's reliability and gives the recruiter a greater feeling of security when predicting long-range success within CIA.

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